

What Marriage and Salvation Share

I've been surprised at how closely earthly marriage parallels salvation. Here are some of the similarities I've found. Perhaps you'll find others.

Permanence

Salvation is permanent. It can't be undone. A literal translation of [Hebrews 13: 5](#) makes that stunningly clear. In that verse, God literally promises He will *never let us sever our relationship with Him* and *never, never, never leave us*. This is the strongest language in the entire New Testament. Salvation is permanent. Marriage is to be permanent as well.

Marriages are intended to illustrate to the world permanence of God's unbroken commitment to us. Divorce tears apart marital oneness and blurs God's illustration of the unbreakable oneness with God that salvation brings. By our faithfulness to each other, we picture God's faithfulness to those in the world who may not yet know Him.

Marriage and Salvation share permanence

Public Vows To Be Faithful

Marriage vows have another function – they define a relationship. The common words “Forsaking all others” make clear that there is no middle ground in marriage. We either *are* married or we *aren't*.

Salvation also has no middle ground. We either *are* Christians, or we *aren't*. Such exclusive commitment allows intimacy to develop. How? By providing the security that helps us risk the vulnerability that deep intimacy requires.

Making our marriage vows publicly helps us keep our vows. Knowing that we have witnesses to our wedding vows make those vows less easy to squirm out of. It's trickier to pretend we weren't really serious when others hear our promise to be faithful. It's also easier to keep our promises when others know we made them and will help us live out our words.

God as well asks us to have witnesses to our decision he joined to Him. We are to confess to others that Jesus is now our Lord ([Romans 10:9](#)).

Oneness and Otherness

Both weddings and salvation bring oneness. Both the Old and New Testaments say the man and woman become “one flesh.” ([Genesis 2:24](#), [Matthew 19:5](#), [Mark 10:8](#), [1 Corinthians 6:16](#), [Ephesians 5:31](#)). At salvation, when we join ourselves to Jesus, we become “one spirit” with Him ([1 Corinthians 6:17](#)). God deliberately uses the word “oneness” to describe both marriage and salvation.

Oneness, however, does *not* mean sameness. In both marriage and salvation, two who *differ* become intimate's. Oneness in both realms occurs with one who is “other” than ourselves. Though we resemble God, we are not the same as God— we are different. Wife and husband resemble each other, but are not the same as each other— they are different. The first marriage, between Adam and Eve, explicitly names that difference: male and female.

For human marriage is to accurately reflect our marriage with God they must mirror God's Edenic example: God joins two who differ in gender.

Marriage and Salvation share both oneness and otherness.

A New Address

Earthly marriage generally brings a new address. In biblical times, the husband-to-be prepared a home for his bride-to-be. When that home was ready, the bride came to his home for their public wedding ceremony and the celebratory banquet. Then – and not until then – the groom brought his bride into his private chambers for a personal celebration of their new intimacy,

These *earthly* wedding customs foreshadow and closely parallel the *heavenly* wedding when Jesus takes the church as His bride. Jesus is now preparing a place for us to live in heaven ([John 14:2-3](#)). There will be both a heavenly marriage ceremony and a wedding banquet ([Revelation 19:7](#) and [19:9](#)). Best of all we will spend eternity in the presence of God.

On earth, God dwelt in the innermost private room of the Jewish Temple, the Holy of Holies. In biblical times, that room was called a *chamber*. I suspect that the earthly chamber parallels the heavenly chamber where the bridegroom Jesus will bring His bride.

Marriage and Salvation share a new address.

Celebration and Joy

Earthly grooms rejoice as the bride draws near. He sees her delight and she sees his. Guests at an earthly wedding share the groom's joy. Guests at a heavenly wedding do the same. [Luke 15:10](#) tells us that the Angels thrill watch each salvation event.

You've probably watched the face of many a bride as she walks slowly towards her groom. But have you ever watched the groom as he watches her approach? The next time you go to a wedding, tear your eyes off the bride and watch the groom's face. you'll get a picture (though pale at best) of Jesus's joy when a Christian, male or female, approaches Him. Each believer is the object of His joy [Isaiah 62:5](#) tells us just that: "*As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so your God will rejoice over you.*"

If it's hard for you to even imagine that kind of look on the face of Jesus, you need to revise your thinking, because His joy is real, as is our joy towards Him. "*Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready*" ([Revelation 19:7](#))

Marriage and Salvation share celebration and joy

A Single Question

Is Jesus your Lord? Then look forward to heavenly intimacy with Him. Rejoice and be glad! Anticipate! Thrill with longing! Get yourself ready!

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